**We Are Boston gala celebrates diversity**

BY LING-MEI WONG

Hundreds of supporters gathered together at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center on Dec. 12 to honor Mayor Thomas Menino’s commitment to diversity at the eighth We Are Boston Gala, hosted by the Office of New Bostonians. Founded in 1998, the Office of New Bostonians ensures new immigrants have access to the civic, economic, social and cultural life of Boston.

“Our city is great because every generation of immigrants make it new,” Menino said. “I’m so proud of the Office of New Bostonians; Boston is the first city in America to have this office… I say to you all, continue to work hard and continue to make Boston a city that really understands diversity.”

At the gala, Menino announced that $200,000 in funding will be used to benefit English programming through the Office of New Bostonians’ English for New Bostonians. Menino also presented awards to four individuals to honor their contributions to diversity: George Russell, executive vice president at State Street Corporation with the We Are Boston Leadership Award; Jim Hogan, senior group vice president of stores, New England, Target Corporations with the Corporate Courage Award; Clementina Chéry, president and CEO of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute with the Community Champion Award; and Edwin Soto, 2013 class valedictorian at Boston International High School and Newcomers Academy with the Youth Action Award. Soto is now studying political science at Bridgewater State University.

For more information about the gala and the Office of New Bostonians, please visit www.cityofboston.gov/newbostonians.

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**Chinatown meeting roundup: Chinatown Coalition, Chinatown Neighborhood Council**

BY LING-MEI WONG

The Chinatown Coalition (TCC) met on Dec. 12 and the Chinatown/ South Cove Neighborhood Council (CNC) met on Dec. 17 for their monthly meetings.

Michelle Wu, city councilor at-large for 2014, stopped by the CNC to discuss her community vision. “I want to make sure everyone is lifted up,” she said. Anne Clark, headmaster at Boston Arts Academy, gave a presentation on the proposed school collocated with Josiah Quincy Upper School at Parcel 25. The school is currently in the feasibility planning stage and seeking community input.

Both schools were founded by Bak Fun Wong, Clark’s mentor and the former headmaster of Quincy Upper. BAA programs cover dance, music, theater and visual arts, with insufficient space for performance and instruction at its Fenway location.

“Our current facility was originally built as a factory, which is now two high schools: BAA and Fenway High School,” Clark said. “Fenway High School is moving to another site. The building limits our mission.”

A community library was also suggested for the school, which Clark welcomed. However, new library branches must be cleared by the Boston Library Association. Chinatown’s own public library was torn down in the 1950s to make way for the highway.

The Phillips Brook House Association gave a presentation on its adult English and citizenship classes. Run by Harvard University undergraduate students, the weekly classes in Cantonese and Mandarin serve about 300 learners on the Harvard campus. While the winter session is closed, interested individuals can sign up for spring 2014 ESL and citizenship courses at chinatownESL@pbha.org and chinatowncitizenship@pbha.org.

CNC

The CNC supported a motion by Fin’s Japanese Sushi & Grill to apply for a beer and wine license. Its business at 62 Boylston Street has operated for two years without one, which affected its business when patrons tried to order alcohol and then left.
Event Calendar

Free home care info clinic
Every Saturday
9 a.m. to noon
1 Billings Road, #228
North Quincy, MA 02171
Multicultural Home Care offers free advice and assistance to folks who have questions regarding home health services for their elders. If you have questions regarding how to get a visiting nurse, physical therapist, home health aide or homemaker, feel free to come to the Quincy office on Saturdays. For more information, please call (617) 479-8880 or (617) 285-9638.

Free legal clinic
6 to 8 p.m.
285-9638.
(617) 479-8880 or (617) 285-9638.
For more information, please call (617) 472-2200 or visit www.quincysharenurses.org.

Christmas Eve service
Tuesday, Dec. 24
7 p.m.
308 West Squantum Street
Quincy, MA 02171
The Good Neighbor Lutheran Church will celebrate Christmas.

First Night 2014
Tuesday, Dec. 31
10 a.m.
First Night Boston 2014 features a full lineup of musical, visual, and performance arts events, leading up to Boston Family Fireworks on Boston Common and culminating with midnight fireworks over Boston Harbor. The full schedule is available at www.firstnightboston.org. Buttons are $10 and children under 4 are admitted for free.

Chinatown Coalition meeting
Thursday, Jan. 9
9:30 a.m.
38 Ash Street, Boston, MA 02111
The Chinatown Coalition meeting will be held at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center. The public is welcome to attend.

Financial seminar
Saturday, Jan. 11
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Metropolitan conference room
38 Oak Street
Boston, MA 02111
This seminar for homebuyers and renters looks to assist Christmas.

Chinatown Winner
Boston, MA 02111
The Chinatown winner school will be held at the Josiah Quincy School’s cafeteria. The public is welcome to attend.

Chinatown Resident Association meeting
Wednesday, Jan. 8
9:30 a.m.
708 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111
This seminar for homebuyers and renters looks to assist Christmas.

Newspaper ad
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Fax: (617) 482-2316
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Want to get published in our Chinese New Year issue, Jan. 31? Submit a 300-word article on the topics below to editor@sampan.org by Jan. 10 and you could be part of New England’s only Chinese-English newspaper!

-Chinese New Year folklore
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-Year of the Horse
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- Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Psychology
- Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Nursing
- Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Allied Health Sciences
- Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Fine Arts
- Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
- Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Physical Education
- Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Social Work
- Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Criminal Justice
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Equal Housing Opportunity
Chinatown native Hung Goon proud to give back

BY LING-MEI WONG

Hung Goon is no stranger to Chinatown. Goon moved to the United States from Hong Kong when he was 7 years old and grew up in Castle Square. Despite moving to Brighton, he remains active in the neighborhood and committed to improving both its streets and its community. In addition to other Chinatown organizations, Goon was elected the 2014 president for the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) on Dec. 3 for a two-year term; he will also continue to serve on the Chinatown/South Cove Neighborhood Council (CNC) in 2014 after being reelected for a three-year term on Dec. 1.

“Growing up in Chinatown, there are a lot of people I grew up with who didn’t stay here,” Goon said. “Hopefully when they get older, they’ll come back to serve the community. I see at the meetings, it’s mostly older gentlemen. I would like younger people to join, so there’s a mix of older and younger folks.”

As the youngest of five children, Goon studied at the Boston Public Schools from kindergarten through high school. After graduating from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, he went on to find a career in public service. Currently a human resources generalist with the Middlesex County Sheriff, Goon has also worked for the state treasurer and state secretary.

“When I walk around Chinatown, people ask me for help,” Goon said. “I meet a lot of elected officials, I know different departments.”

Apart from his day job, Goon’s community service requires a serious time commitment. The CNC meets on the third Monday of every month to discuss zoning, safety and neighborhood issues. The CCBA meets the last Monday every other month, bringing 40 Chinatown family associations and organizations together to decide on property management and other community business. Goon is also part of the Goon Shoe Family Association, which represents the extended Goon family in New England.

“If able, I’d like to start the legwork to do another affordable housing project,” Goon said about the CCBA. “It’s needed in the community. It takes more than two years to start the legwork, then I’d pass it on to the next CCBA president.”

The CCBA presently owns Tai Tung Village, Waterford Place and the SCM Building at 50 Herald Street, which is leased to C Mart.

As Chinatown is Goon’s home, he dreams about it becoming a destination. He plans to work with the convention center and tour buses to attract visitors.

“We have the Chinatown Gateway and could have performances to bring people here,” he said.

Mo Cowan engages and inspires in Chinatown

BY KENNY SUI-FENG YIM

Sen. William “Mo” Cowan spoke about diversity on Dec. 9 as part of the Community Conversation speaker series, co-sponsored by Gov. Deval Patrick’s Asian American Council and the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center.

Attendees included prominent local politicians of color, including Suffolk County Sheriff Steve Tompkins, Boston Ward Five Republican committee member Richard Pien and James Chan, constituent service representative for District 2 City Councilor Bill Linehan.

While Cowan is neither a native Bostonian nor of Chinese descent, he advocates for democratic engagement across the aisle, bridging communication to “everyone, everywhere.” Born in rural North Carolina, Cowan had dreamed of becoming a physician. Instead, he landed in corporate law and replaced Secretary of State John Kerry as senator in 2013.

In his speech, Cowan explained his reasons for working in private practice before being named by Patrick to public office. According to Cowan, Congress needed to avoid operating in silos and stay focused instead on the collective American dream.

Cowan also expressed great admiration for President Barack Obama. Cowan’s grandmother, who lived during the Jim Crow era, said on Election Day 2008 that she never believed she would see the day an African American would become president. As hopeful and symbolic as Obama’s presidency is, he noted that nothing is perfect, but hoped Obama would not be the last minority president.

The theme of Cowan’s speech was how closing the education gap was the biggest civil rights fight of our time. According to Cowan, there needs to be more representation of senators of color — currently there are six — across the political spectrum. Instead of division, politics needs to promote diversity. He acknowledged that there is a tendency to put outsized responsibility on those who looked like us to solve everything. Yet this self-proclaimed poor kid from the South has done what he has set out to do: “Engaged with real people in real time.”

The Community Conversations series strive to provide the Asian American community with opportunities to learn about what the speakers do and their thoughts on various issues affecting the Asian American community.

The 28th annual celebration of the Harry H. Dow Memorial Legal Assistance Fund dinner took place Dec. 6 at Empire Garden. Incoming Boston city councilor at-large Michelle Wu was the keynote speaker. (Image courtesy of Marsha Ma.)

The Community Conversations series strive to provide the Asian American community with opportunities to learn about what the speakers do and their thoughts on various issues affecting the Asian American community.

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The Community Conversations series strive to provide the Asian American community with opportunities to learn about what the speakers do and their thoughts on various issues affecting the Asian American community.
Boston Renaissance named a Confucius Classroom of the Year

BY BOSTON RENAISSANCE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Boston Renaissance Charter Public School received the 2013 Confucius Classroom of the Year Award. Renaissance is one of five schools to receive the award — three in the United States and two overseas — out of 600 schools.

“Boston Renaissance was selected for its strong leadership and outstanding track record in developing its Chinese language and culture program, and a demonstrated commitment to international exchange and collaboration, and a global vision for the future for its students and community,” said Jeff Wang, director of Chinese language initiatives and education at the Asia Society.

Providing the infrastructure for the development of effective and sustainable Chinese language programs for American students, Asia Society’s Confucius Classrooms Network works to strengthen Americans’ understanding of China and build connections between young Chinese and American students. “Boston Renaissance is honored to receive the 2013 Confucius Classroom of the Year Award, and we congratulate our team of dedicated Mandarin teachers,” said Roger Harris, superintendent and CEO of Boston Renaissance. “Exposing urban children to second languages and foreign cultures should be an imperative of the U.S. education system.”

Responding to President Obama’s “100,000 Strong Initiative,” a national effort designed in 2009 to increase the number of American students learning Chinese and studying in China, Boston Renaissance launched a Chinese program. It began in 2009 with 88 K1 and K2 students and now reaches more than 700 students in Grades K-4. Mandarin instruction will be schoolwide K-6 for nearly 950 pupils by 2015.

By BOSTON RENAISSANCE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL


MassDOT Secretary and CEO
Richard A. Davey

On behalf of the MBTA, thank you for your time and interest in responding to this Notice to Bidders Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

Beverly A. Scott, Ph.D.
MBTA General Manager and
Rail and Transit Administrator

December 6, 2013

One Greenway project at Parcel 24 receives full funding

SUBMITTED BY NEW BOSTON FUND AND ASIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

New Boston Fund, a private equity real estate investment, development and management firm, and Asian Community Development Corporation, a 26-year old community-based organization serving the Greater Boston Asian American population, have recently closed on the financing and ground lease for One Greenway, a 362-unit mixed-income development. The two organizations plan to restore the vibrancy of Hudson Street by bringing housing back to both sides of the street and reconnecting Chinatown’s eastern edge to its adjoining neighborhoods.

“One Greenway and its 362 units of housing will bring added vitality to Hudson Street, creating a true neighborhood feel,” said Boston Mayor Thomas Menino. “The 145 affordable units will help keep Chinatown residents in their neighborhood, while standing as an example of public-private partnership at its best. It shows what we can do when we all work together.”

Bordering Chinatown and the Rose Kennedy Greenway, One Greenway represents a rebirth of the Parcel 24 site. The project will help spur additional neighborhood development while also maintaining economic and social diversity in Chinatown.

“One Greenway is an example of the growth and opportunity that can be created through committed public-private partnerships,” said Gov. Deval Patrick. “If we want to expand opportunity in our Commonwealth, this is what government must do and do well.”

Located just four blocks from South Station at the corner of Hudson and Kneeland Streets, the development will act as the southern gateway to the Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston’s newest linear urban park that stretches more than one mile and features landscaped gardens, promenades, art, fountains and specialty lighting systems.

“We’re excited that full construction activities are underway at One Greenway thanks to our public and private sector partners,” said Sean Sacks, New Boston Fund’s vice president of development. One Greenway’s 362 residential units will be housed in two buildings that bookend a third of an acre of publically accessible open space. The 312-unit North Building includes 217 market rate rentals and 95 affordable rentals, while the South Building, to be constructed in a subsequent phase, will contain 50 affordable condominiums. Affordable rent and ownership units for low and moderate-income households account for 40 percent of all units.

The project also includes 135 garage parking spaces and approximately 8,500 square feet of retail and community space.

“One Greenway is a triumph for the Chinatown community and for those who believe a vibrant, thriving downtown Boston benefits from diversity. It’s wonderful to accomplish such a tremendous milestone after years of planning,” said Janelle Chan, executive director of the Asian Community Development Corporation.

“Construction for the North Building is slated to be complete in the summer of 2015. Suffolk Construction is the general contractor and ADD Inc. is the architect.

Electronic proposals for the following project will be received through the internet using Bid Express until the date and time stated below, and will be posted on www.bidx.com forthwith after the bid submission deadline. No paper copies of bids will be accepted. Bidders must have a valid digital ID issued by the Authority in order to bid on projects. Bidders need to apply for a digital ID with Bid Express at least 14 days prior to a scheduled bid opening date.

Electronic bids for MBTA Contract No. C99CN01, Operations Control Center (OCC) Upgrades, 45 High Street, Boston, MA. (Class 5-ELECTRICAL, Total Project Value $6,475,000), can be submitted at www.bidx.com until two o’clock (2:00 p.m.) on January 2nd, 2014. Immediately thereafter, in a designated room, the Bids will be opened and read publicly.

Work consists of: Renovation of the existing OCC to provide additional assets for security video. The renovation of the 7th and 8th floors will provide the MBTA with a modern, state-of-the-art Security video display and train control system. These improvements will be based on new, cost-saving and “green” initiatives with energy efficient systems, and ergonomic upgrades throughout the facility. Moreover, the new security display and control system will be based on modern IP standards and commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) equipment and software that can be readily upgraded without the need to replace expensive hardware. This Contract is subject to a financial assistance Contract between the MBTA and the Federal Emergency Management.

The DBE Goal is 12%. This Contract is subject to a financial assistance Contract between the MBTA and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA Participation one-hundred (100) percent.

Additional information and instructions on how to submit a bid are available at http://www.mbta.com/business_center/bidding_solicitations/current_solicitations/

On behalf of the MBTA, thank you for your time and interest in responding to this Notice to Bidders Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

Beverly A. Scott, Ph.D.
MBTA General Manager and
Rail and Transit Administrator

Richard A. Davey
MassDOT Secretary and CEO

December 6, 2013
How to apply for heating bill assistance

BY CANDICE CHEN

Winter has arrived in New England. As temperatures drop, heat is essential for every Bostonian. If heating bills are a strain on your household’s budget, there are several community resources for help.

Action for Boston Community Development
Service: Fuel assistance, weatherization, heating systems and more
(617) 357-6000
Region: Greater Boston area
www.actionboston.org

Citizens Energy
Service: Assistance with oil and natural gas heating bills, along with the Shelter Winter Assistance Program to heat homeless shelters every winter
(617) 542-4487
Region: National
www.citizensenergy.com

Mass Energy
Service: Discount heating oil
(617) 524-3950 or 1 (800) 287-3950
Region: Massachusetts
www.massenergy.org

Good Neighbor Energy Fund
Service: Financial assistance with heating bills
1 (800) 334-3047 (service area codes 508, 617, 781 and 978)
Region: Greater Boston area
www.massenergy.org

Mass Resources
Service: A directory of energy-relat ed assistance programs
Region: Massachusetts
www.massresources.org

Building Pathways registration ends Dec. 30
FROM THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT 2 CITY COUNCILOR BILL LINEHAN

Building Pathways, a building trades pre-apprenticeship program serving low-income residents of the Greater Boston area, is looking for qualified people who want to begin careers as electricians, plumbers, sprinkler fitters, laborers and more. The deadline to submit applications is Dec. 30.

Building Pathways provides seven weeks of trades exploration and hands-on experience in the building trades followed by placement in a union apprenticeship.

Space is limited. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. You must attend an information session to apply:

Every Tuesday, 10 a.m.
Boston Housing Authority
125 Amory Street
Roxbury, MA 02119

Every Wednesday, 10 a.m.
Action for Boston Community Development
19 Temple Place
Boston, MA 02111

No RSVP required. For more information, contact Maria Chavez at (617) 988-4356, Azell Martin at (617) 988-4060, or Brett Thomason at (617) 348-6750.

YOUTH VOICES

Procrastination
BY TIFFANY DU

Tick tock, tick tock, tick tock. The clock goes ticking away. The room shifts into a wonderland of inanimate objects alive. Papers, pencils and pens talk as they would in a dream.

Blank pages fill themselves with scribbles, sketches and scumbles. Then I wake up from my daydream, and gawk over my progress.

I still have time, I tell myself, then I read my comics. Page two, 10, 12, they pass by like a rocket. A few more minutes then I’ll stop, that’s what they all say.

I pick up my pencil and twirl it a few times, it turns into a propeller then hits the ground in moments. A sigh escapes from my mouth, my hand too lazy to move until it grips a new pen and touches the tip to the paper.

Name
Date
Class
Period
Space skipped paragraph indent

...and I’ll finish the rest of this poem later.
Winter blood sugar tips for diabetics

BY ZHANGLIN KONG, REGISTERED DIETICIAN AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF WIC/NUTRITION AT SOUTH COVE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

It is common for people with diabetes that their blood sugar level goes higher than usual when the temperature drops. Many factors contribute to this, as keeping up with a balanced diet and exercise is not easy in winter. When daylight gets much shorter and the air gets colder, we tend to stay indoors to enjoy the warmth.

It is also the time that we relax, gather, celebrate and enjoy holidays with delicious food and drinks to unwind from a whole year of work. All of these can disrupt our well-established routines from warmer seasons. The bright side is that, as a brand new year is about to start, we are usually more motivated to make resolutions for better blood sugar, well-managed body weight or higher level of fitness. To give you a jumpstart for the holidays, here are some highly useful tips to give you extra confidence for the holidays.

Diet

It is difficult for everyone to resist the urge to feast on holiday treats. For so long, good food symbolizes love. But keep in mind that you have a balanced diet to maintain. You also need to track the amount of carbohydrates you eat.

• Eat fruits or vegetables before you start big meals, if you know there won’t be many greens.
• Drink plenty of low-calorie fluids while eating: sparking water, water, or diluted juice. The fluid will take up extra space in your stomach, so you won’t eat too much food.

• Avoid dishes with heavy gravy or sauces. If there is dressing or sauce on the side, try not to dip your food into them.
• Use a smaller plate if possible, and fill your place only once with a balanced proportion of vegetables, grains and foods, following MyPlate recommendations.

Exercise

Regular physical activities provide many benefits. They keep you warm, lower your blood sugar, help your body use insulin better and improve your mood.

As we spend more time inside, there are many options to stay active indoors. You can watch exercise DVDs, play dance games on your Wii or Xbox, or practice yoga or Pilates right in your living room. These low-impact workouts guarantee a fun time and a good stretch.

In spite of the temperature, walking or jogging outside is still achievable in this weather. To keep warm, wear layers and keep bare skin covered as much as possible. Layers can trap warm air in between and make it easier for taking clothes off and putting them back on.

Walking or jogging with your dog or a workout buddy is a good way to keep you motivated. Look for a local walking/running group to join, or reconnect with an old friend for exercising together. The encouragement and support will carry you through the difficulties and make the time fly by.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently released the National Health and Nutritional Examination Survey (NHANES) with additional data briefs on hypertension, cholesterol and obesity among adults in the U.S. by age, gender, race and ethnicity. This detailed national survey of health characteristics, for the first time, includes important health status and information on Asian Americans (AA).

The CDC is to be applauded for including Asian Americans, the fastest growing minority in this country. However, the study, by using inaccurate criteria, comes to the incorrect conclusion that the AA population has a significantly lower rate of obesity among various ethnic groups and is therefore at less risk for obesity-related health problems, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney disease and cardiovascular disease. A great deal of evidence suggests that the body mass index (BMI) range used by federal health agencies to define obesity is inappropriately applied to the AA population. Thus, members of a national coalition of organizations that focuses on diabetes research, treatment, and advocacy of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI), urge both the CDC and the readers of the survey to put these results in the proper context before concluding that obesity is of less concern in the AA population than in other ethnic groups.

The CDC’s conclusion is that the prevalence of obesity is lower in the AA population than other ethnic groups is likely to give a false impression of the health risks facing the AA population since many of the disorders that are related to excess weight occur at much lower BMI levels in the AA population. Thus, to apply criteria of obesity that are only applicable to other ethnic groups naturally results in an inaccurate conclusion. This misrepresentation could have a potentially detrimental impact on AA populations since it will decrease the attention paid to obesity-related health issues by health care providers and even Asian Americans themselves, especially if the insurance reimbursement policy is based on an incorrect standard of obesity.

The members of Joslin Diabetes Center’s Asian American Diabetes Initiative and AANHPI Diabetes Coalition hope to work further with the scientists of CDC’s NHANES study to refine and reassess the data from this historic first sampling of the AA population. We want to make sure that this important analysis accurately illuminates the health and nutritional status of the very diverse and complex AANHPI community.

For more information regarding diabetes in the AA population, please visit www.aadi.joslin.org.

Dr. George King is the chief scientific officer at Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston and co-chair of the Asian American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Diabetes Coalition. (Image courtesy of the Joslin Diabetes Center.)
The Sampan's Diet and Diabetes special edition looks at healthy recipes, diabetes research and realistic diet goals.

This New Year: Make realistic resolutions to lose weight

SUBMITTED BY STATEPOINT

 Millions of Americans resolve to lose weight and commit to healthful eating at the beginning of each year, but many resolutions are notoriously broken. Why? Many registered dietitian nutritionists say fad diets are partly to blame.

“Planning to hit the gym for four hours every day or stick to a super restrictive fad diet is overwhelming for your body and mind,” said registered dietitian nutritionist and Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics spokesperson, Jessica Crandall. “However, research shows that slow, healthy weight loss is more likely to last than dramatic weight changes.”

Crandall said that forgetting fad diets and getting back to the basics of moving more and eating smarter are your best bets for success.

Be realistic, be specific

“Instead, choose smaller, healthy changes you can stick to over the long term. One large goal can seem overwhelming. Instead, build a plan that works for your unique nutritional needs and lifestyle. A registered dietitian nutritionist can help you develop a plan that’s right for you. Here are some challenging, reachable resolutions to consider:

• Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables.
• Make at least half of the grains you eat whole grains.
• Fit in physical activity where you can, whether taking a family walk after dinner or hitting the gym.
• Serve regular, balanced meals and snacks with a variety of nutrient-rich foods.

Also, make sure the goals you set are measurable, so that you can easily review and track your progress, as well as reward yourself. Allow time to achieve each smaller goal so you are not discouraged if you haven’t met them.

Build a support network

Enlist family and friends to try new healthy recipes with you or to be your workout buddy. Having a support network can help you overcome midnight snacking urges and hit the gym in even the coldest of weight changes.

“It’s important to be sure to track your progress towards your health goals, and give yourself encouragement and solutions along the way,” Crandall said. “To make things easier, it’s always a good idea to have a food and nutrition expert on your side.”

This New Year, don’t be disappointed. With a smart plan in place, you can make fitness and nutrition resolutions that are easier to keep.

How to have a happy holiday without cravings or cigarettes

BY THE ASIAN SMOKERS’ QUITLINE

Holidays are supposed to be an enjoyable time when family and friends gather together with food and drinks, but it can also be stressful as people rush from place to place. A cigarette can sound like the perfect way to distress, especially during a busy holiday season, but cessation coaches at the Asian Smokers’ Quitline have tips and encouragement for people attempting to quit, or want to stay quit through the season.

“There can be a lot of social pressure to smoke during holiday gatherings with family and friends so it’s important to be aware of triggers and to have adequate support,” said Dr. Joann Lee, project manager of the Asian Smokers’ Quitline. “One way is to let others know that you’re trying to quit, and find support from family and friends.”

Here are some other general tips from cessation coaches on ways to avoid triggers and stay quit during the holidays:

1) In the midst of holiday busyness, get adequate rest.
2) Avoid spicy and sugary foods, and alcohol. Holidays are often all about the eating and feasting, but avoid foods that will make you crave cigarettes even more. Eat fruit or less sugary dessert on the menu. As for alcohol, put it away, and instead, reach for a sugar-free seltzer, club soda, or apple cider.
3) If weather allows, go for a walk. To prevent taking up a new bad habit such as eating whatever you can find to avoid having a cigarette, stay active and exercise.
4) Hang out with nonsmokers. If all your friends are smokers, it may be time to make some new friends.
5) Having a supportive community is important on this journey. Don’t hesitate to contact the Asian Smokers’ Quitline, a free nationwide telephone program for Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese speakers who want to quit. When you call, a friendly staff person will offer various services: self-help materials, a referral list of other programs, one-on-one counseling over the phone, and a free two-week starter kit of nicotine patches. The Quitline is regularly available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., Pacific Time:
   o 1-800-838-8917 Mandarin and Cantonese
   Hours will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Dec. 24 and 31, and closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1.
6) “Like” the Asian Smokers’ Quitline on Facebook. The Quitline offers tips and other information at www.Facebook.com/AsianSmokersQuitline.
7) Lastly, don’t give up on quitting. You can do it!
Menino visits Chinatown for final Christmas tree lighting

BY LING-MEI WONG

Mayor Thomas Menino brought some holiday cheer to Chinatown during the Christmas tree lighting on Dec. 8 at Phillips Square. Menino was joined by Santa Claus, Frosty the Snowman and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer for 16 tree lightings throughout Boston from Dec. 6 to Dec. 8.

At each location, children lined up to take pictures with Santa and the brightly lit tree. Chinatown Main Street and local businesses provided hot tea and light refreshments while Macy’s gave gift bags to children.

This year’s tree lighting is the last for Menino and marks the end of his term as Boston’s mayor. He will step down on Jan. 6, 2014 as mayor-elect Marty Walsh takes office. Menino will begin work at Boston University in February.

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